

M^r George Withers Revived:

O R,

His PROPHESEIE of our present Calamity, and (except we repent) future misery.

Written by him in the Year 1628: Printed. 16 Feb. 1679/80

GOD hath a controversie with our Land,
And in an evil plight affairs do stand:
Already we do smart for doing ill,
Yet us the hand of God afflicteth still,
And many see it not; as many be
So wilfull, that his hand they will not see.

Some plainly view the same, but nothing care;
Some at the sight thereof amazed are
Like *Belthazar*, and have a trembling heart,
Yet will not from their vanities depart.
Some dream that all things do by chance succeed,
And that I prate more of them than I need:
But Heaven and Earth to witness I invoke,
That causelessly I nothing here have spoke.

If this, O sickly *Island*, thou believe,
And for thy great infirmity shalt grieve,
And grieving of thy follies make confessions,
And so confess thine infinite transgressions,
That thou amend those errors, God shall then
Thy manifold distempers cure agen;
Make all thy Scarlet Sins as white as Snow,
And cast thy threatned judgments on thy foe.
But if thou (fondly thinking thou art well)
Shalt slight this Message, which my Muse doth tell,
And scorn her counsel; if thou shalt not rue
Thy former ways, but frowardly pursue
Thy wilfull course; then hark what I am bold
(In spite of all thy madness) to unfold:
For I will tell thy Fortune; which, when they
That are unborn shall read another day;
They will believe Gods mercy did infuse
Thy Poets breast with a Prophetick Muse.
And know, that he this Author did prefer,
To be from him, this *Isles Remembrancer*.

If thou, I say, Oh *Britain*, shalt retain
Thy crying sins, thou dost presume in vain
Of Gods Protection: If thou stop thine ear,
Or burn this Rowl, in which recorded are
Thy just Indictments, it shall written be
With new additions, deeply stamp't on thee
With such Characters, that no time shall race
Their fatal image from thy scarred face.
Though haughtily thou dost thy self dispose;
Because the Sea thy borders doth inclose;
Although thou multiply thy inland Forces,
And muster up large Troops of Men and Horses;

Though like an Eagle thou thy wings display'st,
And (high thy self advancing) proudly say'st,
I sit aloft, and am so high, that none
Can fetch me from the place I rest upon:
Yea, though thou no advantages didst want,
Of which the gloriest Emperies did vaunt;
Yet, sure, thou shalt be humbled and brought low,
Evn then, perhaps, when lest thou fear'st it so.

Till thou repent, provisions which are made
For thy defence, or others to invade,
Shall be in vain; and still, the greater cost
Thou shalt bestow, the honour that is lost
Shall be the greater; and thy wasted strength
Be sick of a Consumption at the length.
Thy *Treaties* which for peace or profit be,
Shall neither peace nor profit bring to thee.
Yea, all thy winnings shall but fewel be,
To feed those follies that now spring in thee.
On all thy fruits and Cattel in the fields,
On what the Air, or what the Water yields,
On Prince and People, on both weak and strong,
On Priest and Prophet, on both old and young;
Yea, on each person, place, and every thing,
The plague it hath deserved, God shall bring.
A leanness shall thy fatness quite devour;
Thy Wheat shall in the place of wholesome Flower,
Yield nought but Bran. Instead of Grass and Corn,
Thou shalt in time of Harvest reap the Thorn,
The Thistle, and the Briar. Of their shadows,
Thy Groves shall robbed be. Thy Flower Meadows
Shall sterill wax. There shall be seldom seen
Sheep on the Downs, or Shepherds on the Green.
Thy Walks, thy Gardens, and each pleasant Plot,
Shall be as those where men inhabit not.
Thy Villages, where goodly dwellings are,
Shall stand as if they unfrequented were.
Thy Cities, and thy Palaces, wherein
Most neatness and magnificence hath been,
Shall heaps of rubbish be, and (as in those
Demolish'd Abbies, wherein Daws and Crows
Now make their nests) the Bramble and the Nettle,
Shall in their Halls and Parlours root and settle:
And moreover, they that now are trained,
In ease, and with soft pleasures entertained;
Instead of idle games, and wanton dances,
Shall practice how to handle Guns and Laurels,

us. 65
[2]
And be compell'd to leave their friends embraces,
To end their lives in divers uncouth places,
Or else, thy face, with their own blood defile,
In hope to keep themselves and thee from spoil.

Thy purest Rivers God shall turn to blood ;
With every lake that hath been sweet and good.
Ev'n in thy nostrils he shall make it sink,
For nothing shall thy people eat or drink,
Until their own, or others blood it cost ;
Or put their lives in hazard to be lost.

Most loathsome Frogs ; that is a race impure,
Of base condition, and of birth obscure,
This hateful brood shall climb to croke and sing,
Within the lodging Chambers of the King ;
Yea, there make practise of those natural notes,
Which issue from their evil-sounding throats,
To wit, vain brags, revilings, ribaldries,
Vile slaunders, and unchristian blasphemies.

The Land shall breed a nasty Generation,
Unworthy either of the reputation
Or name of men ; for they as Lice shall feed,
Even on the body whence they did proceed ;
There shall moreover swarms of divers Flies
Engendred be in thy prosperities,
To be a plague : and still are humming so,
As if they meant some weighty work to do,
When as, upon the common stock they spend ;
And nought perform of that which they pretend.

Then shall a darkness follow, far more black,
Than when the light corporeal thou dost lack.
For, grossest ignorance, o'reshadowing all,
Shall in so thick a darkness thee inthrall,
That thou a blockish people shalt be made,
Still wandering on in a deceiving shade,
Mistrusting those, that safest paths are showing,
Most trusting them who counsel thy undoing ;
And ay tormented be with doubts and fears,
As one that Out cries in dark places hears.

Nor shall the hand of God from thee return,
Till he hath also smote thy eldest born.
That is, till he hath taken from thee quite,
Ev'n that whereon thou set'st thy whole delight ;
And filled ev'ry house throughout thy Nation,
With deaths unlooked for, and lamentation.

So great shall be thy ruine, and thy shame,
That when thy neighbouring Kingdoms hear the same,
Their ears shall tingle. And when that day comes,
In which thy follies must receive their dooms ;
A day of clouds, a day of gloominess,
A day of black despair and heaviness,
It will appear. And then thy vanities,
Thy gold and silver, thy confederacies,
And all those Reeds on which thou hast depended,
Will fail thy trust, and leave thee unbefriended.

Thy King, thy Priests, and Prophets then shall mourn,
And peradventure fainedly return
To beg of God to succour them : but they
Who will not hearken to his voice to day,
Shall cry unheeded ; and he will despise
Their Vows, their Prayers, and their Sacrifice.

A Sea of troubles, all thy hopes shall swallow ;
As waves on waves, so plague on plague shall follow :
And every thing that was a blessing to thee,
Shall turn to be a curse, and help undo thee.
And when thy sin is fully ripe in thee,
Thy Prince and People then alike shall be.
Thou shalt have Babes to be thy Kings, or worse,
Those Tyrants who by cruelty and force,
Shall take away thy ancient freedoms quite,
From all their Subjects ; yea themselves delight

In their vexations : and all those that are
Made slave thereby, shall murmur, yet not dare
To stir against them. By degrees they shall
Deprive thee of thy Patrimonials all ;
Compel thee (as in other Lands this day)
For thine own meat, and thine own drink to pay.
And at the last begin to exercise
Upon thy Sons, all heathenish tyrannies,
As just *Prerogatives*. To these intents,
Thy Nobles shall become their instruments ;
For they who had their birth from Noble races,
Shall (some and some) be brought into disgraces.
From Offices they shall excluded stand,
And all their vertuous off-spring, from their Land
Shall quite be worn : Instead of whom shall rise
A brood advantaged by impieties.
That seek how they more great and strong may grow,
By compassing the publick overthrow.
They shall abuse thy Kings with Tales and Lies ;
With seeming love, and servile flatteries ;
They shall perswade them they have power to make,
Their Wills their Law, and as they please to take
Their peoples goods, their children and their lives,
Ev'n by their just and due *Prerogatives*.

When thus much they have made them to believe,
Then they shall teach them practises to grieve
Their Subjects by, and instruments become
To help the scruing up by some and some,
Of Monarchies to Tyrannies. They shall
Abuse Religion, Honesty, and all
To compass their Designs. They shall devise
Strange Projects ; and with impudence and lies,
Proceed in setting them. They shall forget
Those reverent usages which do besit
The Majesty of State ; and rail, and storm,
When they pretend disorders to reform.
In their high Counsels, and where men should have
Kind admonitions, and reprovings grave,
When they offend, they shall be threatned there,
Or scoft, or taunted, though no cause appear.

Whatever from thy people they can tear
Or borrow, they shall keep, as if it were
A prize which had been taken from the foe,
And they shall make no conscience what they do
To prejudice Posterity : For they
To gain their lust, but for the present day,
Shall with such love unto themselves endeavour,
That (though they know it would undo for ever
Their own posterity) it shall not make
The Monsters any better course to take.

Nay, God shall give them for their offences,
To such uncomely reprobated senses :
And blind them so, that (when the Axe they see
Ev'n hewing at the root of thine own tree,
By their own handy-strokes) they shall not grieve
For their approaching fall : no, nor believe
Their fall approacheth, nor assume that heed,
Which might prevent it, till they fall indeed.

Mark well, oh *Britain* ! what I now shall say,
And do not slightly pass these words away ;
But be assured, that when God begins,
To bring that vengeance on thee for thy sins,
Which hazzard will thy total overthrow,
Thy Prophets and thy Priests shall slyly sow
The seeds of that dissention and sedition,
Which time will ripen for thy said perdition :
But not unless the Priests thereto consent,
For in those days shall few men innocent
Be grieved (through any quarter of the Land)
In which thy Clergy shall not have some hand.

ever in thy fields (as God forbid)
 The blood of thine own children shall be shed
 By civil discord, they shall blow thy flame,
 That will become thy ruin, and thy shame;
 And thus it will be kindled, when the times
 Are nigh at worst, and thy increasing crimes,
 Almost compleat; the Devil shall begin,
 To bring strange Crotchets and Opinions in
 Among thy Teachers, which will breed disunion,
 And interrupt the visible Communion
 Of thy establish'd Church. And in the stead
 Of zealous Pastors (who Gods Flock did feed)
 There shall arise within thee, by degrees,
 A Clergy, that shall more desire to fleece
 Than feed the Flock. A Clergy it shall be
 Divided in it self: and they shall thee
 Divide among them, into several factions,
 Which rend thee will, and fill thee with distractions:
 They all in outward-seeming shall pretend
 Gods glory, and to have a pious end;
 But under colour of sincere devotion,
 Their study shall be temporal promotion;
 Which will among themselves strong quarrels make,
 Wherein thy other children shall partake.
 As to the Persons, or the cause they stand
 Affected, ev'n quite throughout the Land.
 One part of these will for preferment strive,
 By lifting up the Kings Prerogative
 Above it self; They shall perswade him to
 Much more than Law, or Conscience bids him do;
 And say, God warrants it. His holy Laws
 They shall alledg, to justify their cause;
 And impudently wrest, to prove their ends,
 What God for better purposes intends.
 They shall not blush to say, that ev'ry King
 May do like Solomon in every thing,
 As if they had his Warrant: and shall dare
 Ascribe to Monarchs, rights that proper are
 To none but Christ; and mix their flatteries
 With no less gross and wicked blasphemies,
 Than Heathens did; yea make their King believe,
 That whomsoever they oppress or grieve
 It is no wrong; nor fit for men oppressed
 To seek by their own Laws to be redressed.
 Nay further, to their wicked ends they shall
 Apply the sacred Story; or what ever,
 May seem to further their unjust endeavour,
 Ev'n what the Son of Hannah told the Jews
 Should be their scourge (because they did refuse
 The Sov'raignty of God, and were so vain,
 To ask a King, which over them might reign
 As Heathen Princes did) that curse, they shall
 Affirm to be a Law Monarchicall,
 Which God himself established to stand,
 Throughout all ages, and in every Land,
 Which is as good Divinity, as they
 Have also taught, who do not blush to say
 That Kings may have both Wives and Concubines,
 And, by that Rule whereby these great Divines
 Shall prove their Tenet, I dare undertake
 (If found it hold) that I like proof will make
 Of any Jewish Custom, and devise,
 Authority for all absurdities.
 But, false it is; for, might all Kings at pleasure
 (As by the right of Royalty) make seizure
 Of any mans possessions: why, I pray
 Did Ahab grieve, that Naboth said him nay?
 Why made he not this answer thereunto,
 (If what the Prophet said some Kings would do,
 Were justly to be done) thy Vineyard's mine;
 And, at my pleasure, Naboth, all that's thine

Assume I may; why, like a Turkey-chick
 Did he so foolishly grow fullen-sick,
 And get possession by a wicked fact
 Of what might have been his by Royal Act?
 If such Divinity as this were true,
 The Queen should not have needed to pursue
 Poor Naboth, as she did, or so contrive
 His death; since by the Kings Prerogative
 She might have got his Vineyard. Nor would God
 Have scourg'd that Murther with so keen a rod
 On Ahab, had he asked but his due:
 For, he did neither Plot, nor yet pursue
 The Murther; nor (for ought that we can tell)
 Had knowledge of the deed of Jezebel,
 Till God reveal'd it by the Prophet to him.
 Nor is it said, that Naboth wrong did do him,
 Or disrespect, in that he did not yeild,
 To sell, or give, or to exchange his Field.
 Now if what here is mention'd, thou dost heed,
 (Oh Britain!) in those times that shall succeed,
 It may prevent much loss, and make thee shun
 Those mischiefs, whereby Kingdoms are undone,
 But, to thy other sins, if thou shalt add
 Rebellions (as false Prophets will perswade)
 Which likely are to follow, when thou shalt
 In thy profession of Religion halt:
 Then will thy Kings and people scourge each other
 For their offences, till both fall together:
 By weakning of your Powers to make them way,
 Who seek and look for that unhappy day.

Then shall disorder ev'ry where abound,
 And neither just nor pious man be found,
 The best shall be a Bryer and a Thorn,
 By whom their neighbour shall be scratcht and torn:
 Thy Princes shall to nothing condescend
 For any merit, just, or pious end;
 But either for increasing of their treasure,
 Or for accomplishing their wilful pleasure:
 And unto what they sell, or daign for meed,
 There shall be given little trust or heed:
 For, that which by their words confirm they shall
 (The Royal seals uniting therewithall)
 A toy shall frustrate, and a gift shall make
 Their strictest Orders no effect to take.
 The Parents, and the Children shall despise
 And hate, and spoil each other: she that lies
 Within her Husbands bosom, shall betray him;
 They who thy people should protect, shall slay them:
 The aged shall regarded be of none,
 The poor shall by the rich be trodden on:
 Such grievous insolencies everywhere
 Shall acted be, that good and bad shall fear
 In thee to dwell; and men discreet shall hate
 To be a Ruler, or a Magistrate;
 When they behold (without impenitence)
 So much injustice, and such violence.

And when thy wickedness this height shall gain,
 To which, no doubt, it will ere long attain,
 If thou proceed: Then from the bow that's bent,
 (And half way drawn already) shall be sent
 A mortal arrow; and it pierce thee shall
 Quite through the head, the liver, and the gall.

The Lord shall call, and whistle from a far,
 For those thine enemies that fiercest are,
 For those thou fearest most; and they shall from
 Their Countries, like a whirlwind hither come:
 They shall not sleep, nor stumble, nor untie
 Their garments, till within thy fields they lie.
 Sharp shall their arrows be, and strong their bow,
 Their faces shall as full of horreur show,

As doth a Lyons. Like a bolt of thunder,
 Their Troops of Horse shall come and tread thee under
 Their Iron feet. Thy foes shall eat thy bread,
 And with thy Flocks both cloathed be and fed.
 Thy dwellers they shall carry from their own,
 To Countries which their Fathers have not known:
 And thither shall such mischiefs them pursue,
 That they who seek the pit-fall to eschew,
 Shall in a snare be taken. If they shall
 Escape the Sword, a Serpent in the wall
 To death shall sting them: yea (although they hap
 To shun a hundred plagues) they shall not scape;
 But, with new danger still be chas'd about,
 Until that they are wholly rooted out.

The *Plowman* then, shall be afraid to sow;
 Artificers, their labour shall forego;
 The Merchant-man shall cross the Seas no more,
 (Except to fly and seek some other shore)
 Thy ablest men shall faint, the wise ones then,
 Shall know themselves to be but foolish men.
 And they who built and planted by oppression,
 Shall leave their gettings to the foes possession:
 Yea, God will scourge thee, *England*, seven times more,
 With seven times greater *Plagues* than heretofore.
 Then, thy *Allies* their friendship shall withdraw;
 And, they that of thy greatness stood in awe,
 Shall say (in scorn) is this the valiant Nation,
 That had throughout the world such reputation,
 By Victories upon the shore? Are these
 That people that were Masters of the Seas,
 And grew so mighty? Yea, that petty Nation,
 That is not worthy of thy indignation,
 Shall mock thee too; and all thy former fame,
 Forgot shall be, or mention'd to thy shame.

Then wo to them who darkness more have lov'd
 Than light; and good advice have disapprov'd:
 For they shall wander in a crooked path,
 Which neither light, nor end, nor comfort hath.
 And when for *Guides* and *Counsel*, they do cry,
 Not one shall pity them who passeth by.

Then wo to them that have corrupted been,
 To justify the wicked in his sin;
 Or, for a bribe the righteous to condemn:
 For flames (as on the chaff) shall seize on them:
 Their bodies to the Dunghil shall be cast;
 Their flower shall turn to dust; their flock shall waste,
 And all the glorious titles they have worn,
 Shall but increase their infamy and scorn.

Then wo to them that have been rais'd aloft
 By good mens ruins; and by laying soft
 And easie pillows under great mens Arms.
 To make them pleas'd in their alluring charms.
 We gather Armies, and we Fleets prepare;
 And then, both strong and safe we think we are.
 But when we look for Victories and glory,
 What follows, but events that make us sorry?
 And 'tis Gods mercy that we turn our faces
 With so few losses, and no more disgraces.
 For what are most of those whom we commend
 Such actions to; and whom we forth do send
 To fight those *Battels* which the Lords we call,
 But, such as neither fight for him at all?
 Whom dost thou make thy Captains, and dispose
 Such offices unto, but unto those
 (Some few excepted) who procure by friends
 Command, and pay to serve their private ends,
 These by their unrepented sins, betray
 Thy *Cause*; by these, the honour, and the day
 Is lost: and when thou hopest that thy trouble
 Shall have an end, thy danger waxeth double.

We fain would be at peace, but few men go
 That way, as yet, whereby it may be so.
 We have not that humility which must
 Effect it: we are false and cannot trust
 Each other, no nor God with true confessions;
 Which shews that we abhor not our transgressions.
 It proves, that of our errors we in heart
 Repent not, neither purpose to depart
 From any folly. For all they that are
 Sincerely penitent, do nothing fear
 So much as their own guilt, nor seek to gain
 Ought, more than to be reconcil'd again.
 And they that are thus minded, never can
 Be long unreconcil'd to God or man.
 Believe me *England*, howsoever some
 Who should foresee thy plagues before they come,
 Endeavour to perswade thee that thou hast
 A hopeful time, and that the worst is past.
 Yet I dare boldly tell thee, thou hast nigh
 Worn out Gods patience by impiety.
 And that unless the same we do renew
 By penitence, our folly we shall rue.
 And, if we do not more Gods will regard,
 That mischief is but for a time defer'd.

Be mindful therefore while it is to day;
 And let no good occasion slip away.
 Now rend your hearts, ye *Britains*, wash and rinse them
 From all corruption, from all evil cleanse them,
 Go offer up the pleasing Sacrifice
 Of *Righteousness*: from folly turn your eyes.
 Seek peace, and follow it with strict pursute:
 Relieve the needy; Judgment execute;
 Refresh the weary, right the fatherless:
 The strangers and the widows wants redress:
 Give praise to God, depend with lowly faith
 On him, and what his holy *Spirit* saith:
 Remember what a price thy ransom cost,
 And now redeem the time that thou hast lost.
 Return, return thou (oh backsliding Nation)
 And, let thy tears prevent thy desolation:
 As yet thou maist return: For Gods embrace
 Is open for thee, if thou hast the grace
 To give it meeting. Yet, Repentance may
 Prevent the mischiefs of that evil day
 Which here is mention'd: yet, thou maist have peace,
 And by discreet endeavouring, encrease
 Each outward grace, and ev'ry inward thing,
 Which will additions to thy comfort bring.

Now grant us peace, O Lord! for perilous
 The times are grown, and no man fights for us
 But thou, O God! Nor do we seek or crave,
 That any other *Champion* we may have.
 Thy Church in these Dominions, Lord preserve
 In purity, and teach us thee to serve
 In holiness and righteousness, until
 We shall the number of our days fulfil.
 Defend this Kingdom from all overthrows,
 By forraign Enemies, or home-bred foes.
 Our King with ev'ry grace and vertue bless,
 With thine honour, and his own encrease.
 Inflame our Nobles with more love and zeal,
 To thy true Spouse, and to this Common-weal.
 Inspire our Clergy in their several places,
 With knowledg, and all sanctifying Graces;
 That by their Lives and Doctrines they may rear
 Those parts of *Zion* which decayed are.
 Awake these *People*, give them souls that may
 Believe thy Words, and thy Commands obey.